

**Fifth Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction  
in the Americas (RPA)**  
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*Palais des congrès*

## Saint Lucia's Statement

**The priorities for action on disaster risk reduction for Saint Lucia, as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), are set out in the SAMOA Pathway, which was adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly in November 2014.** This universal adoption reaffirms the world's acknowledgement that small island developing States present "a special case" for sustainable development due to their unique and particular vulnerabilities; and these unique and particular vulnerabilities must be taken into account in the approval of a Regional Action Plan for the Americas.

Of course, the aim of the SAMOA Pathway is to lay out an action plan for achieving sustainable development in SIDS, and while important, disaster risk reduction is only one component of this overarching plan. In addition to addressing disaster risk reduction, the SAMOA Pathway recognises that the impacts of climate change and sea-level rise continue to pose a significant risk to SIDS and their efforts to achieve sustainable development and, for some, represent the gravest threat to their survival and viability.

The SAMOA Pathway links disasters and climate change, by recognising that SIDS continue to grapple with the effects of disasters exacerbated by climate change, which impede their progress towards sustainable development. It further recognises that disasters disproportionately affect SIDS and that there is a critical need to build resilience, strengthen monitoring and prevention, reduce vulnerability, raise awareness and increase preparedness to respond to and recover from disasters. **In the area of disaster risk**

**reduction, countries committed to support SIDS in their efforts to implement the Sendai Framework, and in particular to:**

- a) Access technical assistance and financing for early warning systems, disaster risk reduction and post-disaster response and recovery, risk assessment and data, land use and planning, observation equipment, disaster preparedness and recovery education programmes, including under the Global Framework for Climate Services, and disaster risk management;
- b) Promote cooperation and investment in disaster risk management in the public and private sectors;
- c) Strengthen and support contingency planning and provisions for disaster preparedness and response, emergency relief and population evacuation, in particular, for people in vulnerable situations, women and girls, displaced persons, children, older persons and people with disabilities;
- d) Mainstream policies and programmes related to disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and development, as appropriate;
- e) Harmonize national and regional reporting systems, where applicable, to increase synergies and coherence;
- f) Establish and strengthen risk insurance facilities at the national and regional levels and place disaster risk management and building resilience at the centre of policies and strategies, where applicable;
- g) Increase participation in international and regional disaster risk reduction initiatives.

**For SIDS, these are critical elements, which will need to be considered in the formulation and agreement of a Regional Plan for the Americas.**

**In addition to the above, the Regional Plan should also address the relationship between disasters caused by**

**natural hazards and loss and damage resulting from human-induced climate change.** The Sendai Framework provides new ideas, programmes and guidelines to tackle different types of disasters, including global warming and climate change risks. The four priority areas of the Framework: 1) understanding disaster risk; 2) strengthening disaster risk governance; 3) investing in resilience; and 4) enhancing preparedness, track very closely with areas of work on loss and damage identified in the Paris Agreement and the ongoing work of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage.

**Finally, the Regional Plan for the Americas must recognise that for SIDS, financing is of paramount importance.** While SIDS recognize the importance of efforts to strengthen leadership regarding our own development, we should bear in mind that there is no one-size-fits-all formula that will guarantee development effectiveness and that the specific situation of each country must be fully considered in the financing equation. The Regional Plan for the Americas should include provisions for the access to financing from all sources and at all levels to advance sustainable development in SIDS, including the satisfactory implementation of the Sendai Framework and its provisions, especially in light of the additional burden being imposed by climate change.